

Appln. No.: 09/506,449
Amendment dated December 27, 2004
Reply to Office Action of July 2, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The office action of July 2, 2004 has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 19, 23, 35, 39 and 40 remain pending in this application; claims 1-5, 7-18, 20-22, 24-34, 36-38 and 41 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 6, 19, 23, 35, 39 and 40 are allowed.

Claims 5, 18, 28, 34, 38 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 5,920,826 to Metso et al. In view of the cancellation of these claims, this rejection is deemed moot.

In reviewing the file, applicants have discovered that they have not received an initialed copy of page 1 of the PTO-1449 form in the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the application on February 18, 2000 making the listed references of record, although an initialed copy of page 2 of the PTO-1449 form was returned with the office action mailed September 26, 2002. In addition, U.S. patent no. 5,920,826 applied by the action to reject the claims discussed below is not of record either, although the corresponding EP application no. 0 748 139 is of record. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request the Examiner to return an initialed copy of page 1 of the PTO-1449 form submitted with the application and to make U.S. patent no. 5,920,826 of record with her next communication. Should the Examiner need another copy of page 1 of the PTO-1449 form submitted with the application, she is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

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CONCLUSION

If any additional fees are required or if an overpayment is made, the Commissioner is authorized to debit or credit our Deposit Account No. 19-0733, accordingly.

All rejections having been addressed, applicants respectfully submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicit prompt notification of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.

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